



**Montgomery County, MD
Commission on People with Disabilities
Meeting Summary Minutes
December 15th, 2010**

Welcome and Approval of November Meeting Summary Minutes:

Trish Gallalee, Chair, convened the meeting. Aaron Kaufman, Commissioner, motioned for the November Meeting Summary Minutes to be approved. Daphne Pallozzi, Commissioner, seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the November Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Presentation of Awards:

Trish Gallalee presented Mark Maxin, former Chair of the Commission on People with Disabilities from 2009-2010, and Aaron Kaufman, former Vice Chair of the Commission on People with Disabilities from 2009-2010, with a certificate of appreciation from County Executive Isiah Leggett in recognition and appreciation of his outstanding leadership and significant contributions to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities. Mark was commended for his leadership in the passage of Bill 46-09, Personnel – Regulations – Person with Disabilities Hiring Preference. Aaron was commended for his significant guidance on legislative and funding issues.

Recap of the Retreat, Ground Rules in Place, Getting to Meetings on Time, Roberts Rules of Order, Submitting Agenda Items to Chair by Steering Committee:

Trish reminded Commissioners of the ground rules that were put into effect at the last meeting, which are included on the back of the meeting agenda. In addition, all commissioners are asked to turn off their cell phones during the meetings. She reiterated the importance of getting to meetings on time as well as being respectful to guest speakers and other Commissioners. It was discussed at the last Steering Committee meeting that those meetings should be considered as the planning committee for upcoming meetings. If a Commissioner has an item that they would like to see on an agenda, they are encouraged to attend or email the agenda item prior to the Steering Committee to Trish or Charlie Crawford.

Discussion of Goals:

Trish and Charlie drafted 2011 goals for the Commission. A discussion was held regarding the Commission's over-arching goal. Aaron Kaufman, Commissioner, commented that given the County's current financial crisis and impending budget cuts, the Commission will have to advocate strongly for programs and services for vulnerable populations. Daphne Pallozzi, Commissioner concurred and Steve Riley, Commissioner, agreed with Aaron and Daphne's comments, adding that the Commission will not be able to achieve the set goals if there are no funds to do so.

Betsy Luecking, Staff, explained that the County has supplemented some state programs and hence these supplemental funds are being looked at. Montgomery County is the only county in the state of Maryland that supplements funds to providers who serve people with developmental disabilities in the amount of approximately \$7M per year. The County is looking at programs that are only funded by the State that we supplement with County tax dollars. For example, the State provides 60 hours of respite care a year, while the County adds another 100 hours to bring it to 160 hours a year. Daphne added that the County Council is focusing more on improved outcomes and quality of life when reviewing which programs and services to cut.

Jackie Simon, Commissioner, would like to include more of an emphasis on creating and maximizing partnerships with other agencies whose responsibilities include some of the Commission's goals, such as the Housing Opportunities Commission and their efforts to promote fair housing. Trish will add a statement to the over-arching goal regarding the Commission's advocacy efforts concerning the County's budget.

A discussion was held regarding the three main goals of the Commission: transportation, employment, and housing. Paul Meyer, Commissioner, suggested that the issue of “affordability” be added to housing.

Mark Maxin, Commissioner, suggested adding the concept of retention and reasonable accommodation to the employment goal. Ed Kenny, Commissioner, suggested strengthening the language.

Susan Smith, Commissioner, noted that the issue of people with disabilities becoming homeless is due in part to the limited number of subsidies available. She suggested adding an educational piece to the housing goal. Steve suggested adding the following language to housing goal: “Promote policies and programs that reduce impediments to or promote access to housing in Montgomery County by individuals with disabilities.”

Once the edits have been made, a finalized version of the document will be made available.

Update from the Chair and Vice Chair:

Trish attended a Health & Human Services Boards, Committees, and Commissions Meeting on November 22nd. Montgomery County receives 40% of their funding from the State. The County has not been told what the cuts will be. It was discussed what could be privatized, what could be revenue generating, and what can we live with. Trish brought up the issue of County inspection practices for group homes as an area that needs to be looked at to conserve funding.

There are three groups currently looking at the structure of Montgomery County:

- Organizational Reform Commission - Comprised of 8 members that are tasked with developing a restructuring plan due January, 2011.
- Office of Legislative Oversight – Reviewing sources of the structural deficit and how to rebase the deficit.
- Cross-Agency Group – Looking at resource sharing. For example, Information Technology (IT) resources shared between Montgomery County and Montgomery County Public Schools.

Trish asked Commissioners for comments that she will share at the next HHS Meeting being held in January.

Some counties are seeking to contract out case management. Daphne said that Community Support Network has a whole unit that does case management where in most counties it is privatized. County employees make approximately \$20K more per year than those who are privatized. Maryland is moving to a targeted case management system. Trish reminded Commissioners to e-mail her via her new e-mail address at cpwd_chair@verizon.net and to copy Charlie Crawford as well at ccrawford@starpower.net.

Unfinished Business:

Trish asked for Commissioners to provide feedback for the following questions: Do you know the progress, needs or actions undertaken to alleviate the above impediments since 2006? What do you see as impediments in 2011? What do you suggest could be done for the 2011 impediments? The impediments report for 2007 identified a lack of currently available affordable housing, especially for persons with disabilities, difficulty citing affordable housing particular for special needs and group housing, unfair lending practices, lack of a general awareness of fair housing issues in Montgomery County, and lack of comprehensive testing and study information on the housing environment in Montgomery County. Megan Larson, Commissioner, suggested that information be updated and maintained. For example, she has noticed that the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) website is not updated with current information making it difficult for prospective applicants. Jackie Simon, Commissioner, is a Realtor who is the listing agent for MPDU's for the Montgomery Housing Partnership and she stated that if the website has not been updated, it is because those properties are still available. She has seen a drop in eligible persons taking advantage of MPDU's. In addition, the Department of Housing and Community Affairs is waiving the income limits to allow leases to be sold to those with higher incomes. There is also an issue with securing loans for some of the condominium MPDU's because if 15% or more of the unit owners are delinquent in CPWD

their HOA or condo fee, no lender will make a loan in that community. For example, one condominium complex has 60% of its unit owners delinquent on their mortgages for more than 30 days so it could be five years before any condo unit could be sold in that community. This also is a reason for foreclosures in those communities. Susan Smith added that it is really a challenge to find housing for people whose incomes are at the SSI level. The only way around it is if the Feds put out more subsidies. Housing authorities aren't getting any additional funds. Jackie added that in the past the Commission has advocated for Community Block grant funds for renovations in existing homes but that the requirements for the use of these funds is stringent. A [Rebuilding Together](#) office is located in Kensington, MD, and is a non-profit that has been doing a large number of repairs and renovations for people in our community and feedback on their program has been excellent. From their website: About Rebuilding Together - Rebuilding Together is the nation's leading nonprofit organization working to preserve affordable homeownership and revitalize neighborhoods by providing extensive rehabilitation and modification services to those in need at no cost to those served. With the help of everyday citizen volunteers, skilled trades people, the support of local business and major corporate partners, Rebuilding Together affiliates in America's largest cities and smallest towns make life considerably better for thousands of low-income homeowners and the communities in which they live by completing 10,000 projects per year. Rebuilding Together has programs dedicated to, energy efficiency, veteran's housing, aging in place and gulf coast reconstruction.

Charlie Crawford would like for the Commission to research if there are any funds for renovations through DORS, independent living or other funding streams.

New Business: None.

Roundtable:

Aaron Kaufman, Commissioner, announced his resignation from the Commission as he recently ran and won his first public office for a seat on the Montgomery County/State of Maryland Democratic Party Central Committee (it is the governing body for the Democratic Party). His endorsements included the States Attorney General, Maryland State Senators and Delegates and other party leaders. His competition was stiff. He ran against 19 other well-known elected officials and party activists. Not only he win, but he won on the first ballot! While his family is not sure, they believe that he is the youngest person ever to have won a position on the Central Committee. He gets to use the title the Hon. Aaron Kaufman. Trish and all others commended Aaron for winning this seat, and thanked him for his four years of service on the Commission.

Betsy Luecking, Staff, commended Francie Gilman, Commissioner, for recommending that Montgomery County's Disability Services website be added to the new [Maryland Access Point](#) website, provides a single point of entry for consumers seeking services within a county or city. This will allow for Montgomery County services and Commission information to be available on the State site.

Action Item Review: None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm

Next Full Commission Meeting: Wednesday, January 12th, 2011 – Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, MD – Lobby Auditorium

Steering Committee Meeting: Wednesday, January 19th, 2011 - 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD - 1st Floor Tan Conference Room, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Office Services Coordinator
Betsy Luecking, Disability Policy Specialist